

Submit drought-related observations

The National Drought Mitigation Center, the National Integrated Drought Information System and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Climate Hubs are working with states, tribes and others across the country to collect crowd-sourced information on the effects of drought. We want to know how drought is affecting you.



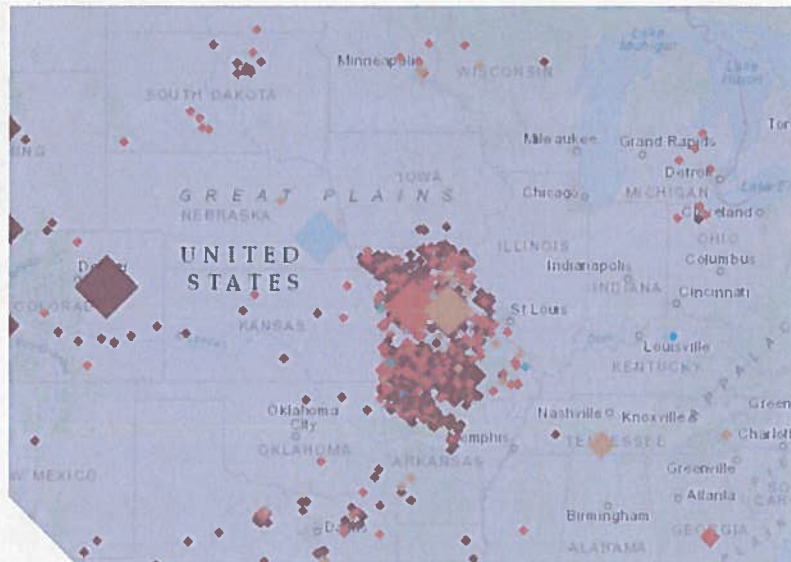
How does this benefit you?

Observer reports help people understand how drought is affecting local conditions. Observations may highlight the need for the weekly U.S. Drought Monitor author to take a closer look at data used to make the U.S. Drought Monitor map. Sometimes reports can help reconcile conflicting data or validate data. The U.S. Drought Monitor map triggers various drought responses, including USDA disaster relief and Internal Revenue Service tax provisions.

State agencies may also make use of understanding how dry or wet conditions are affecting different areas for decisions such as where to position fire-fighting equipment, or where to direct assistance for health and safety-related issues such as dry wells.

How to submit a report

- Go to the current, mobile-friendly survey: <http://bit.ly/droughtreport19>.
- Use the form to pinpoint your location, or to let us know what county you are in, as well as the date of your observation or photo.
- How dry or wet is it? Pick from seven levels, ranging from severely dry to severely wet. Short descriptions on the survey may help you pick a level.
- What if any impacts of drought are you experiencing? Click on any categories that are relevant to you to see a list of potential impacts, and check any that you have experienced. For example, if drought is affecting your crop yield, click on "Report crop production impact" to show the list of related impacts, and then choose "Reduced yield."



- Upload a photo (optional). By uploading the photo, you agree that it may be used and shared for educational and management purposes. A photo of the same spot submitted once a season or once a month would help build up a consistent set of observations, so that we can contrast drought with normal or wet conditions.
- Provide any additional description or caption information.
- Provide contact information (optional), which will not appear on the web: Your name, organization and email.

What happens to your reports?

Condition monitoring reports appear on a map that initially displays how dry or wet observers said it was on the seven-point scale. Separate tabs for each category or sector display any impacts reported, and as of 2019, you can filter by a single impact, such as crop loss. Another tab highlights reports that include photos. Photos may take a few days to appear.

Both the report form and the mapped archive of condition monitoring reports from 2018 are accessible via <https://droughtreporter.unl.edu/submitreport>.

How often should you report?

We recommend that you submit a photo each month or each season, to provide an ongoing comparison of wet, dry and normal conditions. Of course, we also welcome more frequent submissions.

In the long term, we would like to build an online atlas of landscape photos over time, showing what a given place looks like in wet, dry and normal conditions at all times of year. This would be an excellent resource for many uses, including the U.S. Drought Monitor and land and water management.

For More Information

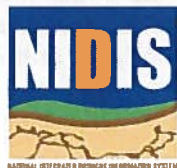
Drought Impact Reporter:

<http://droughtreporter.unl.edu/submitreport>

U.S. Drought Monitor: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>

About the U.S. Drought Monitor: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/AboutUSDM/WhatIsTheUSDM.aspx>

NIDIS: <https://www.drought.gov>



On a scale of one to seven, how dry or wet is it?

The seven-point scale for perceptions of dry or wet conditions is the same scale used by the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS), devised in collaboration with the drought center and with the Carolinas Integrated Sciences and Assessment.

Please use what you know about your part of the country and base your observation on what is normal for this time of year. A normal dry season is not the same as drought.

Severely Dry: There is no soil moisture. Ponds, lakes, streams and wells may be nearly empty or dry. Producers may have crop or pasture losses. Mandatory water restrictions may be in place.

Moderately Dry: Plants may be brown due to dry conditions. Streams, reservoirs or well water levels may be low. Voluntary water use restrictions may be in place. There may be water shortages. Plants, crops or pastures may be stressed. Soil is dry.

Mildly Dry: Growth may have slowed for plants, crops or pastures. Soil is somewhat dry. Local plants, pastures or crops may not have fully recovered if conditions are changing from drier to wetter.

Near Normal: What you're seeing is what you expect for this time of year.

Mildly Wet: Local plants, crops or pastures are healthy, recovering from dry conditions or draining from wet conditions. Soil moisture is above normal.

Moderately Wet: Local plants, crops or pastures are healthy and lush. Soil is very damp and the ground may be saturated with water. There may be standing water in low areas and ditches. Water bodies may be fuller than normal.

Severely Wet: Water levels in lakes, streams and ponds are well above normal. Standing water covers some areas that are normally dry. Soil is wet and ground is completely saturated. There may be flooding.

Categories (Sectors) and Impacts

Crop production

- Decrease in water allocation
- Reduced yield
- Insect infestation
- Crop disease
- Plant stress
- Added well, dam, pipe, etc.
- Increased irrigation

Livestock production

- Reduced pasture, forage
- Decreased stock weights
- Animal stress
- Mortality
- Reduced grazing on public lands
- Hauled water
- Sold livestock

Domestic or municipal water supply

- Low or dry well
- Water quality issues
- Hauling water
- Broken pipelines
- Moving pumps, intakes
- Conservation education
- Water rate change
- Voluntary conservation
- Mandatory conservation

Habitat for wildlife or fish

- Terrestrial habitat changes
- Wildlife disease or mortality
- Animal migration
- Wildlife foraging near people
- Aquatic habitat change
- Water quality change
- Fish disease or mortality
- Reduced fishery production

Recreation & tourism

- Reduced sales, permitting, visits, etc.
- Water receding from access
- Less-appealing landscape (fall colors)
- Ski season shorter
- Hunting, fishing site change
- Tent camping reduced

Other business & industry

- Landscaping business down
- Lawnmower etc. sales down
- Barge traffic curtailed
- Fuel sales change
- Reduced workforce
- Closed business or bankruptcy
- More golf course irrigation

Public & community health

- Cracked foundations
- Air quality, dust
- More vector-borne disease
- Special meetings or activities held
- Ceremonies or festivals cancelled
- Food insecurity
- Stress
- People relocating

Fire

- More fires than usual
- More intense fires
- More fire risk
- Poor air quality
- Property damage
- Smoke from distant fire
- Park or road closure
- Burn or fireworks bans
- Firefighter settlements